

## PRESS RELEASE

### **CHRONIC PAIN OF 65 PLUS, AWARENESS SIHA'S CAMPAIGN GOES ON IN THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT**

*The European Charter of Rights of Citizens Over 65 with Chronic Pain at the chore of a meeting organized by Senior International Health Association in Brussels. The costs for the treatment of chronic pain reaches 271 billion euro a year, 88.16 for seniors*

**Brussels, 7 December 2016** -The creation of a network of European centers of excellence that ensure access and continuity of care, skills, innovation and appropriate patient management; concrete actions and campaigns to raise the awareness of European citizens and the relevant Authorities about the topic of chronic non-cancer pain. These are some of the key requests that SIHA - Senior International Health Association - brings to the European institutions regarding the topic of chronic pain by continuing its campaign to raise awareness of decision-makers about the content of the 'European Charter of Rights of Citizens Over 65 with Chronic Pain'. A meeting has just been concluded in Brussels, at the European Parliament with the support of Medtronic, aimed at raising awareness among MEPs about an issue that, in recent months, has also been addressed in a written statement promoted by SIHA, endorsed by over 150 MEPs: European patients are asking for the creation of a wide network of support among the European institutions.

One European out of five suffers from chronic non-cancer pain, one in four of severe chronic pain. People over 65 are the most affected. An elderly out of two suffers from this disease, the pain gives them seven years of average life expectancy.

These are the patients and the target group that the 'European Charter of Rights of Citizens Over 65 with Chronic Pain' is addressing upon the initiative of SIHA, Senior International Health Association in collaboration with Pain Alliance Europe and Senior Italia FederAnziani.

"We have promoted a written declaration to fight against chronic pain because we wish this disease to be addressed at Eu level with concrete provisions", declares Giovanni La Via, Chair of the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Food Safety of the European Parliament.

"The aim of the Charter - explains Elio D'Orazio, President of SIHA - is the protection of the right to health of citizens who suffer from this disease as important as it is often neglected. The objective is to ensure access to treatment and continuity of care, ensuring quality, security, fairness to elderly patients with chronic pain. In addition the goal is to help Member States to safeguard the rights of the patients increasing awareness on chronic pain at European level so that specific directives could be implemented together with provisions to protect the citizens themselves. "

Back pain, pain in the head and neck, arthritic, and widespread muscle pain are the most frequent diseases. They are associated with symptoms such as depression, loss of social and labor relations capacity. Only 69% of people with chronic pain are being treated in the EU out of which only 41% adequately.

The impact of the treatment of chronic pain on health systems and the economies of the 28 Member States is reflected in heavy loss of working days for those under 65 and, for everyone, in higher costs of socio-health treatment. A patient with chronic non cancer pain costs for health systems on average 2.6 times more than a patient without pain.

According to an estimate of SIHA direct and indirect total healthcare costs for chronic pain disorders in the 28 EU Member States vary from 2% in Germany to 2.9% in Ireland, with an EU average of 2.4% and an equal cost to 271 billion euro per year. The costs for the elderly amounted to almost 90 billion euro (excluding indirect costs such as lost work days).

Eurostat indicates that in the EU there are currently 96.6 million people over 65, accounting for 19% of the EU population. This figure is set to rise to 125 million in 2030 (24.1% of the EU population) to reach 150 million in 2050, (148 million, 28.2% of the EU population). These numbers will make chronic pain of the elderly one of the most pressing health issues across the European continent.

SEE THE VIDEO:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2BJyZD-Sa5s>

DOWNLOAD THE "EUROPEAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS OF CITIZENS OVER 65 WITH CHRONIC PAIN":

<http://siha.cloud.agoramed.it/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/European-Charter-of-the-Rights-of-Citizens-over-65-with-Chronic-Pain-3.pdf>

**Press officer**

**SIHA Senior International Health Association**

Eleonora Selvi

info@sihassociation.org - Mobile +39 366.9847893